

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace page one with the attached replacement page one.

Please amend the first paragraph on page 1 as follows:

This application is a divisional of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/990,073 filed November 21, 2001, which is a continuation-in-part and claims the benefit of copending U.S. Application Serial No. 09/638,772 filed August 15, 2000, now U.S. Patent 6,448,571, which are incorporated herein by reference to the extent permitted by law.

Please amend the Summary of the Invention (second paragraph of page 4 through the sixth paragraph of page 5) as follows:

~~It is in view of the above that the present invention was developed. A preferred embodiment of the invention is a radiation protection system for shielding medical personnel from x rays from an x ray emitter while working on a patient, comprising an x ray table having a first side, a second side and a top surface, the top surface for supporting a patient; a radiation-shielding cubicle having an interior defining a medical personnel region, the cubicle having a ceiling, floor, a first wall for separating the medical personnel from an x ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle, a second wall extending from one end of said first wall adjacent to a first side of the x ray table and a third wall extending from the first wall adjacent to a second side of the x ray table, the first wall having an opening for locating a portion of the x ray table into the interior of the cubicle; a radiation-shielding screen attached to the x ray table for covering the portions of the patient and the top surface of the x ray table located in the interior of the cubicle; a radiation-shielding flexible interface for joining the x ray table to the cubicle, the flexible~~

~~interface having a flexible radiation-resistant skirt sealing the opening; and an integrated procedural environment.~~

~~——— Among the objects and features of the invention is reducing the radiation exposure of staff in an x-ray laboratory.~~

~~——— A second object of the invention is substantially reducing exposure to primary radiation around an x-ray table and thereby permitting doctors to perform fluoroscopic-based medical and surgical procedures with access to a patient without being exposed to excessive amounts of radiation.~~

~~——— A third object of the invention is reducing exposure to secondary radiation in the region around an x-ray table where medical professionals operate on a patient.~~

~~——— A fourth object of the invention is to minimize radiation leaking into a cubicle while the x-ray table moves relative to the cubicle.~~

~~——— Another object of the present invention is to improve the architecture, configuration and design of the equipment items in an x-ray procedure laboratory as well as the efficiency and flow of such laboratories.~~

~~——— Further features and advantages of the present invention, as well as the structure and operation of various embodiments of the present invention, are described in detail below with reference to the accompanying drawings.~~

In one aspect, a method is provided of performing a medical procedure. The method includes providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having an interior defining a medical personnel region and including a first wall having an opening therein, locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle, and separating medical personnel from an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle using the first wall to shield the medical personnel from radiation emitted by the x-ray emitter.

——— In another aspect, a method is provided of using a radiation protection system including an x-ray table having a top surface for supporting a patient and a radiation-shielding screen

attached to the x-ray table for covering a portion of the patient and a portion of the top surface of the x-ray table, wherein the radiation-shielding screen includes at least one port. The method includes extending the radiation-shielding screen over a portion of the patient supported by the top surface of the x-ray table, inserting procedural equipment through the port to access the patient with the procedural equipment, and performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment.

In even another aspect, a method is provided of performing a medical procedure. The method includes providing a radiation-shielding wall having an opening therein, locating the wall with respect to an x-ray table so a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening, joining the x-ray table to the wall using a radiation-shielding flexible interface, sealing the opening in the first wall using a flexible radiation-resistant skirt, and using the wall to separate medical personnel located adjacent a first side of the wall from an x-ray emitter disposed adjacent a second side of the wall opposite the first side to shield the medical personnel from radiation emitted by the x-ray emitter.

In yet another aspect, a method is provided of using a radiation protection system including an x-ray table having a top surface for supporting a patient, a radiation-shielding screen attached to the x-ray table for covering a portion of the patient and a portion of the top surface of the x-ray table, and controls for controlling the system, wherein the radiation-shielding screen includes at least one port. The method includes extending the radiation-shielding screen over a portion of the patient supported by the top surface of the x-ray table, accessing the controls through the port, and controlling the system using the controls.